

Middlesex University Research Repository

An open access repository of

Middlesex University research

<http://eprints.mdx.ac.uk>

Hopkinson, Alan (2007) Linking librarians:North-South cooperation via the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme. Link, 1 . pp. 4-5. [Article]

This version is available at: <https://eprints.mdx.ac.uk/3960/>

Copyright:

Middlesex University Research Repository makes the University's research available electronically.

Copyright and moral rights to this work are retained by the author and/or other copyright owners unless otherwise stated. The work is supplied on the understanding that any use for commercial gain is strictly forbidden. A copy may be downloaded for personal, non-commercial, research or study without prior permission and without charge.

Works, including theses and research projects, may not be reproduced in any format or medium, or extensive quotations taken from them, or their content changed in any way, without first obtaining permission in writing from the copyright holder(s). They may not be sold or exploited commercially in any format or medium without the prior written permission of the copyright holder(s).

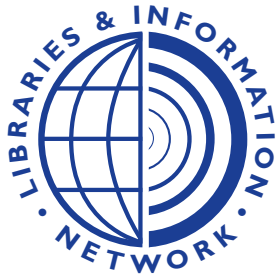
Full bibliographic details must be given when referring to, or quoting from full items including the author's name, the title of the work, publication details where relevant (place, publisher, date), pagination, and for theses or dissertations the awarding institution, the degree type awarded, and the date of the award.

If you believe that any material held in the repository infringes copyright law, please contact the Repository Team at Middlesex University via the following email address:

eprints@mdx.ac.uk

The item will be removed from the repository while any claim is being investigated.

See also repository copyright: re-use policy: <http://eprints.mdx.ac.uk/policies.html#copy>



LINK

Issue 1 August 2007

CONNECTING COMMONWEALTH LIBRARIANS

The magazine of the Association
of Commonwealth Universities'
Libraries & Information Network

This issue

2-3 Protecting university libraries

Jonathan Harle looks at the
ACU journals scheme and how
it led to the creation of our
new Libraries and Information
Network.

4-5 Linking librarians

Alan Hopkinson reports on
the benefits of north-south
exchanges.

6-8 Developing digital libraries in African universities

Diana Rosenberg and **Buhle
Mbambo-Thata** consider the
obstacles to creating electronic
collections, and how they can
be overcome.

8 Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships – Profile

Philemon K Chebon on the
impact of his Professional
Fellowship at Book Aid
International

9 News

10 Recent publications

11 Funding opportunities

An update from **Jon Thornton**.

12 About our Network

**The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities**



Librarianship is one of the most long-standing professions within university life. It has a particularly strong professional ethos, and already has a record of international collaboration. Why, then, has the ACU chosen this area to launch its fourth professional network?

Part of the answer to this question comes from our experience, over the past five years, in developing our programme to provide access to discounted journals. As the programme has grown, it has become clear to us that new channels for regular, informal communication are still welcome at several levels – between, for example, librarians in developed and developing countries, librarians and their institutions, librarians and publishers, and librarians and policymakers.

Making these connections is critical at a time when higher education is prominent on the development agenda, and when the boundaries between libraries and other forms of information dissemination have become more blurred than ever. The potential is huge – but to meet it we need comprehensive information about current provision, problems and good practice.

The ACU journals programme started in Africa, and it has since expanded to other regions. It is important that our network, too, involves the *whole* Commonwealth. In this

context, I would particularly encourage those from developed, as well as developing countries, to sign up. Membership is free, as part of your wider ACU membership, and further details can be found on page 12.

The experience of our three existing networks suggests that the prospects are bright. Research management, human resource management and public relations and communications have proved to be fertile ground for the type of collaboration that we are now seeking. Each has attracted over three hundred members, and has developed its own mechanisms – conferences, publications, electronic mailings and scholarships – depending on specific circumstances. In each case, the emphasis has been on finding practical solutions to practical problems.

We all hope that the Libraries and Information Network will do the same and that you will want to play your part, by returning the form enclosed. In the meantime, I hope that you find this first edition of our network magazine interesting. Needless to say, feedback, ideas and offers of future contributions are all welcome!

John Kirkland

Deputy Secretary-General (Development)

The Association of Commonwealth Universities

Protecting university libraries – the ACU journals scheme

The ACU has run its discounted journals scheme since 2002, delivering over USD 3 million worth of journals, at discounts of 75%-90%. Several years on, the scheme has grown, and so has our understanding of the wider challenges facing university libraries.

Jonathan Harle reviews the achievements of the scheme and considers what the new network hopes to achieve.

Journals are an essential resource, as any university librarian well knows. Whatever the field, it is through journals that the latest research is tracked and back issue collections allow the development of earlier thinking to be traced. Articles in the many thousands of journals now published allow academics to develop and discuss their ideas, and to present the latest methodologies and theoretical perspectives for review and comment by their peers.

But providing good journal collections also presents a considerable challenge. Libraries must ensure access to a range of titles across many disciplines, keeping up to date with new publications and maintaining past collections, all on limited – and in some cases dwindling – budgets. Many publishers now offer electronic journals, as a complement to, or in place of, printed titles. These are a powerful way of widening access to information, but they also present new problems and place new demands on existing resources, requiring improved ICT facilities and better internet connections.

These problems will undoubtedly be familiar to university librarians across the globe. Higher education and research have become increasingly internationalised, and with shared goals come common challenges, although some institutions are, of course, in a better position to respond. Access to academic literature, whether in print or electronic formats, is a particular concern for developing country universities. Years of under-funding have depleted collections in many universities and rising prices

represent even greater outlays. Escalating prices are often met by declining budgets and fluctuating currencies. Even where budgets are stable – or perhaps even beginning to increase – they are typically constrained by competing demands and ever-growing needs. Major international journals are often simply unaffordable; some universities have been forced to massively reduce subscriptions, or even abandon them altogether. It is sadly ironic that in a world awash with information, many universities struggle to maintain basic collections.

Developing the journals scheme

At the ACU's 2001 Conference of Executive Heads, a number of VCs emphasised these problems, and highlighted the need for a collective and coordinated response. Several schemes were already in operation, so the first step was to consider these, and identify where the ACU could play a role. In recent years, electronic publishing has expanded dramatically and a developing trend for online publication was clear from the outset. Reflecting this shift, many organisations had correspondingly focused their schemes on providing online journals.

Electronic publishing continues to present exciting horizons for academic publishing, and for the ways in which libraries are able to deliver knowledge to their students and researchers. But, while it has the potential to allow the latest research to be more widely accessed, in reality limited ICT facilities, problems with connect-

ivity, and the prohibitive cost of bandwidth mean that it is yet to become a viable solution for many universities. As the ACU scheme was developed, it was clear that demand for hard copy journals continued to be strong and that many libraries were keen to build up their physical collections.

After negotiations with a number of leading academic publishers, the ACU launched the Protecting the African Library scheme in 2002. This was subsequently expanded to assist universities in Asia, the Pacific and the Caribbean. Under the banner of the Low Cost Journals Scheme, 24 countries across the Commonwealth are now eligible to participate, enabling them to purchase journals via at massively reduced rates – from 25% to 10% of the orig-

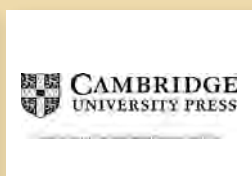
Importantly, both universities and publishers gain something from the scheme, which helps to keep it running.

inal cover price. Over the last five years, these discounts have enabled the scheme to deliver journals with total cover prices of at least USD 3 million. All administration is undertaken by the ACU; universities send their orders and payment, and this is then passed onto the publishers who dispatch journals as normal. For the past five years, the scheme has been coordinated by Deborah Bennett, Senior Programme Officer at the ACU.

Importantly, both universities and publishers gain something from the scheme, which

For more information on the Low Cost Journals scheme visit www.acu.ac.uk/lowcostjournals or contact lowcostjournals@acu.ac.uk

Publishers participating in the scheme include:



helps to keep it running. Both benefit from a simplified order process, and can deal with one central contact. Publishers improve their circulations in areas where they had previously struggled to maintain subscriptions, and do so without credit risks or the problems of currency conversion. That publishers can establish developing countries as feasible markets is crucial, because it is this that ultimately encourages them to engage more deeply with the challenges that are faced by a growing proportion of the world's universities. But of course most importantly, universities have an opportunity to restore their libraries at much lower cost.

However, the problem is not simply one of finance. Although bringing down the cost of journals is the first hurdle, subscriptions need to be sustained, and support needs to be delivered in a way that dovetails with universities' existing systems and their memberships of other schemes. Universities need to be able to build resources such as journals into their core budgets and into long-term strategies, so that if at some point these schemes disappear, or if finances become more secure, they can either step up to full rates, or negotiate new pricing structures themselves. The ACU scheme therefore set out to be as flexible as possible.

Measuring its success

So does it work? By some measures the scheme is a modest one, but crucially it has demonstrated its sustainability. 12 leading publishers participate; all but two of the original number are still involved and new publishers have joined, showing that it meets their needs effectively. Regionally the scheme has been able to expand too; there are now 15 universities taking part, with 23 participating over the last five years. While some have been forced to suspend their involvement from year to year, due to other pressures or difficulties, the flexibility of the scheme means that they can effectively take up where they left off as soon as funding allows. There are also no deadlines, so universities can place orders and pay for journals when they are

able to do so, rather than needing to meet timetables imposed from outside.

The number of universities who have gained from the scheme represents a real success, but we also recognise that there are other universities which would benefit, but have yet to take part. This is partly determined by agreements with publishers. Indian member universities are unfortunately ineligible, as publishers feel that they already have an established market in this area, and are unwilling to include them. That not all eligible members

have participated is in part explained by a number of factors.

Some libraries already secure comparable access through other schemes and this is entirely positive. The ACU intends to address gaps in provision, rather than attempt to draw libraries out of exist-


ing support mechanisms. Other members may not be in a position to make even the reduced investments in journals that the scheme enables. This is unfortunate, but is part of a larger problem which must be addressed in other ways. The agreement with publishers also means that only new orders can be placed, so unfortunately universities with existing direct subscriptions cannot opt to bring these through the scheme. We welcome feedback, however, and would encourage any eligible members who have not participated to get in touch.

Although we try regularly to recruit new publishers, many are already involved with one or more existing programmes, or have their own in-house discounts which universities can access directly. Others are willing to offer discounted subscriptions at different rates, or to a different set of countries, and therefore cannot be included in the scheme; the ACU insists that discounts are offered to the full set of participating countries.

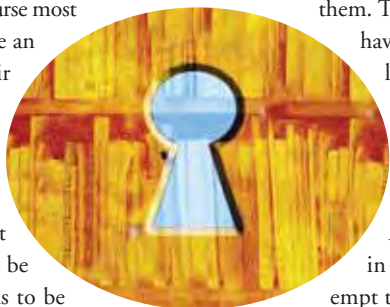
Beyond the scheme

Just as the problem is broader, so measuring the success of the scheme goes beyond numbers of journals dispatched or universities benefited. From the outset the ACU positioned itself as a

facilitator, rather than a donor, aiming to work with, rather than compete against, other initiatives. The International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) and Book Aid International have both been partners, and events have been held involving publishers and universities to help improve coordination between schemes. These partnerships have fostered closer understanding and placed the ACU in a strong position to broaden its libraries work, and to begin to address the wider need for coordination, management and collaboration. Clearly journal access is just part of the complex challenges facing universities and their libraries across the Commonwealth.

The ACU Libraries and Information Network, launching through this, the first issue of its new magazine, aims to harness the wider involvement of librarians and other colleagues across the Commonwealth – from both developing and developed countries – combining expertise and experience to encourage collaboration and share best practice. As well as meeting the day-to-day needs of their users, libraries and librarians have a crucial role to play in the future development of their institutions. New technologies of information access and retrieval, from sophisticated databases to the ever-increasing potential of the internet to link people and information in new ways, mean that universities will rely more and more on their information professionals. It is critical that libraries are fully included in universities' strategic planning, and that institutions recognise the pivotal role of libraries as they seek to meet the challenges offered by societies and economies increasingly driven by knowledge and information. We hope that the network will raise the profile of libraries within institutions, and in so doing support librarians in their negotiations with senior management, ensuring that they receive the resources appropriate to this mission. We hope you will get involved. 

Jonathan Harle is Programme Officer (Libraries) at the ACU.
libraries@acu.ac.uk



Linking librarians:

North-South cooperation via the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme

Alan Hopkinson has worked on a number of international projects focussing on the introduction of library automation and ICT services, and for a variety of agencies including the British Council, UNESCO, UNDP and UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific. Here, he discusses his involvement in hosting librarians at Middlesex University, UK, through the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan.

Gaining through cooperation

Professional exchanges are quite common in the library world; CILIP, the UK-based Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals hosts LIBEX, an exchange scheme for librarians and information workers in the UK. Exchanges are also common between European academic libraries. Through its LIBEX scheme, CILIP recognises that UK librarians have much to gain from placements abroad, in the way of professional experience and knowledge, learning how libraries in other countries operate, new ways of doing things, and developing relationships with information professionals internationally.

Between 1997 and 2002, through contacts developed at the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)'s annual conference, Middlesex had hosted visitors from Thammasat University, Thailand. They had worked very hard to help reduce our cataloguing backlog and in return had learned about our new Horizon system, ready for implementing it themselves. From time to time I had reported at international meetings on the exchanges with Thailand, and on numerous occasions I had been asked by librarians in developing countries if they could come to Middlesex for a similar placement. Invariably, finance was a barrier. Again, I received emails from librarians in developing countries about various matters which had convinced me that they would benefit from a visit to the UK. When I saw the

new Commonwealth Professional Fellowship scheme advertised in 2004 it seemed to be exactly what I had been looking for.

Under this scheme, we have now hosted three Commonwealth Fellows and are about to host another three in the autumn of 2007. In the space available here it is only possible to talk about one, but all have benefited themselves and ourselves in different ways.

Bibliographic exchange

Rajesh Chandrakar, from the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre in India, had corresponded with me about bibliographic exchange formats. Catalogue records are generally not created by the library acquiring a book or other item; they are downloaded from external databases or sent by the book supplier in a format that is used internationally. There are a number of these and international agreement has never been entirely reached. India has been using the Common Communication Format but is now gradually moving towards the MARC21 (Machine Readable Cataloguing for the 21st century) format, which was developed by the Library of Congress in the US and is used the most universally (although the non-English speaking world also uses UNIMARC). Rajesh was interested in conversion between these and I thought we might also be able to benefit from his work as he is the convenor of the MARC21 Core Group at INFLIBNET, where they are under-

taking extensive conversion projects for their clients.

I originally met Rajesh in Ahmedabad after running an IFLA training course on digital libraries in India. INFLIBNET, where he works, is an organisation operating within the University Grants Commission (UGC) to provide digital services to university libraries. For example, they negotiate contracts for e-journals, are developing a national union database of library resources available in UGC-funded universities, are setting up library automation on a system which they developed, and run training courses in using these tools. I realised Rajesh would benefit greatly from seeing how we do the same things at Middlesex, and that we might also learn from him.

The Fellowship programme

Rajesh is an expert on bibliographic exchange formats in India and while with us he worked on a conversion program, something which librarians in Namibia had also identified as a requirement for converting records from the MARC21 to UNIMARC formats. He also spent some time in Middlesex's Library Systems Team, working with Horizon (the integrated library system), particularly on aspects of the library circulation system, which is one of the first to use Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) for stock control and security. He was also able to attend a meeting of the UK Horizon User Group, gained some general experience of the Learning Resources Centre at our Hendon Campus, and attended various library and learning resources meetings.

At Middlesex we use a package developed by UNESCO – CDS/ISIS – and its web-based counterpart developed in Brazil – WWWISIS – as our backup catalogue, and Rajesh was able to ask questions about this. At the same time he was able to do some work for us on its enhancement. The Fellowship funded him to attend the UK Serials Group Conference in Edinburgh, which discussed issues of electronic journals and he was also able to attend meetings of a number of external committees I sit on including a formal British Standards meeting, dealing with language codes, and a meeting of the Book Industry Communication (BIC)

Further information

LIBEX: www.cilip.org.uk/jobscareers/libex

Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK: www.cscuk.org.uk

INFLIBNET: www.inflibnet.ac.in

UNESCO CDS/ISIS: www.unesco.org/isis

Hopkinson, A; Chandrakar, R. 'Introducing RFID at Middlesex University Learning Resources', *Program: electronic library and information systems*, 40 (1) (2006), pp. 89-97

Rajesh Chandrakar at work in the Library at Middlesex University



Product Metadata Group.

Over the three months spent at Middlesex, Rajesh made many external visits. He visited the British Library of Development Studies at the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, from where CDS/ISIS is distributed in the UK, and the Library of the London School of Economics. One of the Deputy Directors of the British Library was very interested to meet him, in order to find out more about the library situation in India, and the Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC) office in Birmingham – INFLIBNET is the nearest equivalent in India – were also interested in more bilateral cooperation with institutions in India. A visit to the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, provided another chance to see the arrangement of collections and user services in an academic library.

One of the highlights of the Fellowship was a visit to Eduserv, the body which deals with authentication through the Athens system, and both they and INASP, the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications which deals with making digital library material available for developing countries, gained from the chance to hear first-hand about what is happening in India.

In addition to making many visits, Rajesh was also able to present a paper at one of the informal monthly meetings of the International Library and Information Group of CILIP, which was very well received. Together we also published a joint article on RFID in *Program*

in January 2006. This was one of the most accessed articles in the electronic form of that journal in 2006.

Aims, successes and impact

The overall objective of the Fellowship programme was to provide training in the management of academic libraries. During his time at Middlesex, Rajesh was able to investigate our use of CDS/ISIS, understand how electronic libraries are used in UK higher education, and gain experience in the implementation of RFID technology and software for running day-to-day inter-library loans. Rajesh was also interested to understand the issues in managing a university library where library and academic computing run as part of a converged service. The only outstanding area was time to learn more about implementing virtual learning environments. Most important in his opinion was the chance to become acquainted with the use of ICT services and their role in managing an academic library.

It is difficult to evaluate what difference Rajesh's visit has made to India; the impact may be unquantifiable. However, one of his roles at INFLIBNET is to visit university libraries around India to run training courses, and the opportunities of the Fellowship are likely to have benefited him here. Three years after the Fellowship, I met Rajesh at a conference on digital libraries which he was helping to organise in India, and he had much increased in confidence. Our connection with INFLIBNET

has also been sustained, as one of Rajesh's senior colleagues has been awarded a Fellowship for Autumn 2007 and will be taking this up at Middlesex.

At Middlesex, many colleagues were interested to meet Rajesh and explain their jobs, and occasionally these discussions made them think differently about what they were doing. In general it is not onerous or time-consuming for Middlesex staff to explain their work to a visitor, and it can highlight for them reasons for perhaps doing things differently. It also increases their knowledge of how things are done in other parts of the world and adds to personal development and a greater international understanding for the visited as well as the visitor. The visit did cause some extra work for staff but this can be readily justified. Middlesex regards itself as an international rather than a national or local modern university, and the university's corporate plan notes that it is recognised for 'the excellence of its research and the strength of its partnerships and international activity'. Middlesex benefits from its many foreign students and it is right and proper that through its Learning Resources service it should be giving something back in this way. **L**

Alan Hopkinson is Head of Systems and Bibliographic Services at Middlesex University's Learning Resources service.
a.hopkinson@mdx.ac.uk

Developing digital libraries in African universities

Electronic collections represent the libraries of the future but, as **Diana Rosenberg** explains, they pose major challenges to African universities. However, there is also reason to be optimistic about a digital future; **Buhle Mbambo-Thata** led the University of Zimbabwe in its work to build digital resources, and takes up the story in her case study article below.

Over the past few decades, university education has been transformed by investment in electronic infrastructure and connectivity, as well as attention paid to e-learning and related approaches. These key tools will enhance the quality of higher education and make it more accessible, and university libraries are an important part of this transformation. They acquire, organise and deliver digital information. They enable and promote its use. Libraries provide the bridge between digital content and the end user. They provide the pathways through the internet jungle.

Over the past fifteen years, libraries worldwide have increased their holdings of electronic information and automated their operations. But within Africa digital devel-

opment has been more uneven. E-journal support programmes offering discounted or free titles are available, but inadequate infrastructures and connectivity can prevent easy access. It is still finance – or lack of it – that has prevented many African university libraries from developing a dynamic interaction with ICTs, building electronic information management systems and creating digital services for their users. In a recent survey (*Towards the Digital Library*; INASP; 2005), librarians, when asked about the key challenges in the future, identified lack of funds for the purchase and maintenance of hardware and e-resources together with a lack, or the retention, of trained staff, followed by the low levels of ICT literacy and e-resource use among users. All the libraries stressed the need for enhanced support from

their institutions and continued support from funding agencies, both financial and in the provision of expertise.

The University of Zimbabwe Library is one that has faced the challenges and succeeded in developing digital resources and services. Despite working in a season of economic decline, it was determined to stay on the cutting edge of 21st century information provision and build a digital library in spite of economic restraints. The article below tells their story.

Diana Rosenberg is Adviser at the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP).
drosenberg@inasp.info

Case study:

University of Zimbabwe Library

In developing a digital library, the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) Library focussed on implementing those critical areas in the *University of Zimbabwe Strategic Plan 2002–2007* that fell within its mandate. It focused specifically on the following strategic goals:

- produce graduates that are ICT literate
- create an environment supportive of graduate students
- create an environment conducive to learning

The library emphasised creating a service that was vibrant and responsive to the clients' needs. It sought an entry point of relevance to development in the university community. The university strategic plan thus served as a good instrument to guide the library's intervention. The library's vision was to create a digital library that complemented its book stock.

We strongly believe that the digital library we have built is sustainable because it is built on our plans. It is not superimposed on activities but has been part of our strategic plan. Our partners have complemented the plans through resources – human, financial and material.

The University Library consists of the Main Library and five branch libraries: the College of Health Sciences Library, the Law Library, the Education Resources Collection, the Map Library and the Veterinary Science Library. The Main Library contains 75% of the total collection of nearly half a million books.

Automation

Automation was the first step. In 1983, the first feasibility study on library automation at UZ was conducted. By 1987, a library automation

group had been set up and in July 1988 a Library Computer Committee was formed. It studied previous reports and indicated they were inadequate. It resolved to seek external funding for library automation and commissioned an internal feasibility study on library automation. The discussions and preparations intensified from then on. In 1991, CDS-ISIS was introduced. It provided for the creation of catalogues but was not an integrated library system. By 1995, work on Erudite, a library automation system, was in full swing but by 1999 the pilot project had been discontinued. A new approach was needed. An external feasibility study provided clear guidelines on how to approach library automation. This time the top management of the university was closely and actively involved. There was a strong partnership with the university's Computer

Centre, which was very important for implementation and maintenance. The needs of stakeholders were identified from the start and a dedicated ICT Unit based in the library was set up. Training of library staff was given top priority. The Innovative Millennium system was chosen and has been successfully implemented and sustained.

CD-ROMs

The Medical Library spearheaded the introduction of CD-ROMs in the 1990s. They were also embraced in the Main Library. By 2000, a dedicated workstation had been set aside to provide access to CD-ROMs. In 2002, a server to hold several CD-ROM titles was purchased and made available for use by readers in the library.

E-journals

The initial introduction to e-journals was through the eIFL-funded EBSCOhost provided through OSI to Southern Africa from 1999–2001. UZ also became a site for the African Virtual Library, which provided access to 2,000 online journals and e-books through NetLibrary.

Access to e-journals was increased through participation in the Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information (PERI) of the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Information (INASP), the Zimbabwe University Libraries Consortium (ZULC) joint purchase scheme and participation in eIFL. Availability thus increased from access to a single e-resource EBSCOhost in 1999 to access to 19,500 online journals by 2006. By 2005, institutions in Zimbabwe were contributing 80% of the cost. The library on its own may not have afforded access to all these e-resources. It was facilitated by being a constituent member of ZULC, through which university libraries share the cost of access to online journals. However, we do not lose sight of the fact that if it was not for carefully negotiated licenses by both INASP and eIFL, the efforts of ZULC may not have added much. Both these organisations helped access nationwide licenses.

Local e-content

The UZ Library put in place a mechanism to ensure that the university would not only be a consumer of the internet but would also input content to the global information space. The process started with uploading content to the university's intranet. In 2002, the database of examination papers was created. This was searchable from any PC on campus linked to the campus-wide network. This greatly increased

Buhle Mbambo-Thata



access to past papers.

Also in 2002, the UZ Library started participating in the Database of African Theses and Dissertations of the Association of African Universities (DATAD). Through this facility, abstracts, authors, titles, supervisors of students were uploaded to a database that is searchable via the internet.

A natural growth from this was the development of a full text e-theses database (ETD). This is searchable and accessible on the campus-wide network. At the time of writing, the library is engaged in discussion with the university community on how to further increase access to the e-theses by the wider community beyond UZ. The latest development in increasing access to locally published research is the Institutional Repository (IR), a digital repository of the output of UZ academics.

Costs

The Past Examination Papers Database is a homegrown solution that runs on an open source operating system (Fedora Core 3), using an open source scripting language (PHP) and an open source database backend (MySQL). The costs incurred in setting it up were the purchase of the server (which in our case is a Pentium 3 machine, with 256 RAM and a 20GB hard drive) as well as the man hours spent in developing the application. The whole project was financed internally and no external support was sought from partners.

The Electronic Theses and Dissertations Database (ETD) also uses an open source application, one developed at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) in the USA and maintained by a community of volunteers. As with the Past Examination Papers Database, the costs incurred in setting it up were the server and the man hours spent in

installing and customising the application. No donor funds were used in setting up the database.

It is not possible to quantify all costs and staff time that went into establishing the Institutional Repository. Some costs were imbedded into staff work time. These included the cost of marketing, liaising, and familiarising staff with process. Because the university did not want to see this as an 'independent' project, from the beginning it was located as part of the work of delivering information within Special Collections. However some costs could be quantified, particularly those for which we sought help from our partners to acquire services that were not available either within UZ or in Zimbabwe generally. eIFL provided initial assistance (approximately GBP 6,000) whilst INASP helped with expanding the size and depth of the repository (approximately GBP 6,000).

Long-term costs are being met by UZ. Although the software is free, the university has the responsibility for upgrades and server maintenance, as well as migration of software. Populating the database has been incorporated into the activities of Special Collections. This is to ensure that IR ceases to be a project but is sustained as part of the process of information delivery of UZ library.

Strategic plan

As referred to earlier, the library found a niche in the university strategic planning document. In 2001, the library set about establishing its own strategic plan for 2002–2007, which set a direction and broad objectives for the coming five years. The plan clearly stated the library's desire to be modern and provide a cutting edge service. Creation of digital libraries and providing users with the skills to use them were central to this.

From then on, the library sought partners, strategic alliances and funding to meet these broad objectives. We are grateful to our partners who assisted us in the building of the digital library, in particular AAU, eIFL, INASP, Sida-SAREC and UZ itself, in particular the Vice-Chancellor's Office. The implementation of the plan has continued to grow in the backdrop of a declining economy and increased competition for scarce resources. However, we have been fortunate in that we have had partners who have supported us in fulfilling our plan.

Information Literacy Skills (ILS)

The library included ILS in its strategic plan 2002–2007 to provide an integrated and assessed user education programme. It was ►

envisaged that a formal programme would be more beneficial to students than the hitherto informal training in user education. The library, being a non-teaching department, identified a strategic partner in the Communication Skills Centre of the university. Information literacy would be taught as part of essential skills for university education. A formal programme started in the academic year 2004–2005. To us, the ILS programme was a critical bridge between the digital content and the end user. The ILS programme was funded fully by UZ. We had tried in vain to seek for partners and establish link programmes with other universities that offered more advanced information literacy programmes without much success. One hopes at a later date it will be possible to establish such links.

Lessons Learnt

- *Vision:* It is critical to have a vision. If we had looked at means first, we would have

been paralysed by lack of capacity. Our vision kept us on course.

- *Resources Will Follow The Vision:* Once we had a vision, we could go to partners and seek for assistance. We learnt that a well-articulated vision statement and a plan of action attract support.
- *Strategic Partners:* Without the assistance of our strategic partners we would not have managed. The closest partner in all this was UZ's Vice-Chancellor's Office.
- *University Management Support:* It was critical that the library worked in tandem with other developments in the university. The library's efforts were thus based on the key deliverables of the university's strategic plan.
- *Teamwork:* Within the library we built a team that was committed to the vision. Each section's team worked to fulfil the mandate of its section in particular and that of the library in general.

- *National Collaboration:* The advent of the Zimbabwe University Libraries Consortium (ZULC) helped to achieve our goals of increasing digital content. Through collaboration in ZULC between 2002 and 2005 the library participated in a scheme that shared the cost of access to e-journals.

This article is an abbreviated version of Chapter One of Building a Digital Library at the University of Zimbabwe: A celebration of Teamwork and Collaboration; Mbambo-Thata, B. (ed.); 2007; INASP (www.inasp.info).

Dr Buhle Mbambo-Thata is currently Executive Director, Library Services at the University of South Africa. She was previously University Librarian at the University of Zimbabwe.
mbambtb@unisa.ac.za

Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships – Profile

Through the awards offered by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK, a number of library and information professionals have come to the UK in recent years to study towards further qualifications or to undertake professional training with a UK based organisation. For further information, please visit the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission's website at www.cscuk.org.uk



Dr Philemon K Chebon was a Commonwealth Professional Fellow at Book Aid International in 2006. He previously studied at Kenya Polytechnic and Loughborough University in the UK, and subsequently gained a Masters and a PhD at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Here he talks about how his work and academic studies have led him to his current role as coordinator of book distribution for Children International.

I joined the Kenya National Library Services (KNLS) in 1986 and worked in several branch libraries in various capacities. Through the course of my work I was confronted by a number of problems which impeded the effective provision of public library services. Foremost of these problems was how to resolve the lack of adequate funds which hamper the delivery of library services. Although the Kenya government implemented major restructuring programs in the provision of basic public

services, it did not adequately address the decline of public library funding and the resultant poor provision of services.

The Fellowship program with Book Aid included training in advocacy, fundraising and communications, leadership, and IT, as well as a placement with Leicestershire Library Service. A key aim of the visit was to exchange ideas with UK librarians on encouraging the growth of a reading culture to support literacy and lifelong learning. During the visit I also selected

2,500 books from Book Aid's warehouse for shipping to libraries throughout Kenya. Every effort needs to be made to support literacy throughout sub-Saharan Africa to support our economic development, and books and information are vital to underpin this.

Although I always considered myself a traditional librarian, my visit to the UK last year was a turning point in my career. I realised that it was time for me to move on and engage in activities which benefit the community directly. I left KNLS in April this year to join Children International, a US-based charitable organisation, to coordinate their book distribution programme. I have been tasked with optimising the programme's fiscal and operational efficiencies and expanding it in East Africa. The first phase entailed making contact and developing relationships with the national library boards in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, and Zambia. The contacts that I made at a Book Aid workshop for library directors from Africa have therefore been very useful.

News

Nick Mulhern, ACU Librarian, rounds up the latest news.



Global science gateway

The British Library and the US Department of Energy are collaborating on the development of a global science gateway. The prototype of the gateway, called 'WorldWideScience.org', aims to make science information resources of many nations globally accessible via an internet portal.

(<http://www.worldwidescience.org>)

Blackwell Reference Online

Blackwell Reference online is the largest academic collection of reference material in the humanities and social sciences to be published online. Users can make a one-time purchase for perpetual access to the whole collection, or buy access to individual subject areas.

(www.blackwellreference.com)

Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN)

CRKN is a 'partnership of Canadian universities, dedicated to expanding digital content for the academic research enterprise in Canada'. The consortium aims to work cooperatively with librarians, researchers, and administrators. CRKN intends to undertake 'large-scale content acquisition and licensing initiatives in order to build knowledge infrastructure and research capacity in Canada's universities'.

(<http://researchknowledge.ca/en/index.jsp>)

Google News archive search

Google News has launched a new service enabling users to 'search for events, people, ideas and see how they have been described over time'. As well as providing access to archives, the search facility can automatically create a timeline of results.

(<http://news.google.com/archivesearch>)

UNESCO distributes 45,000 e-learning modules on information management

FAO, UNESCO and partners worldwide have developed and distributed the Information Management Resource Kit (IMARK) to over 45,000 users. IMARK is an

e-learning initiative to train individuals and support institutions and networks worldwide in the effective management of information.

(http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=23973&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

Libraries' role in stimulating economic development

The Committee on Development Information (CODI), at their fifth session in May 2007, called on African governments to 'invest in knowledge, library and information services as critical agents for the provision of resources and services that ensure continuous employability and entrepreneurship for all'. CODI is a subsidiary body of the Economic Commission for Africa, and provides policy and technical guidance for the sub-programme 'harnessing information for development'.

(www.uneca.org/codi)

Digital age in Sri Lanka

The National Conference on Library and Information Studies (NACLIS), organised by the Sri Lanka Library Association and held in March 2007, discussed what the digital age holds for Sri Lanka. The potential of digital libraries was considered, as exemplified by the 'The E-tuktuk Project', a mobile multimedia centre serving a rural community.

(www.slla.org.lk)

(www.sundaytimes.lk/070325/Plus/013_pls.html)

Reducing internet costs is the next step

The benefits of internet cost reduction for ending the digital divide were emphasised at the UN Global Alliance for ICT for Development meeting in March. Technology leaders predicted that bringing down costs could 'set off the same wave of connectivity that has made mobile phone usage commonplace in developing countries'.

(http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=24202&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

Ask-a-Librarian online

Queensland University of Technology has launched a new MSN-based 'Ask-a-Librarian' service, available to all students via a PC or laptop. A SMS (short message service) is also to be trialled later this year.

(www.qut.edu.au)

New science search service

A consortia of the world's leading science and technology societies and publishers have launched a new free search service which gives access to over 3 million documents. Scitopia.org includes peer-reviewed journal content and technical conference papers from leading electronic science libraries.

(www.scitopia.org)

Journal of Information Literacy

A number of information partners, including the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), have launched a new journal which aims to investigate and analyse how information literacy impacts on organisations, systems and the individual. The journal is available online, as an open source publication.

(www.informationliteracy.org.uk/JIL.aspx)

New resource for managing libraries

LAMA, the Library Administration and Management Association, has launched a new online journal, offering practical advice on managing libraries.

(www.ala.org/ala/lama/lamapublications)

World Information Society Report 2007

Beyond WSIS is the second in a series of reports produced by the World Information Society 'intended to track progress toward bridging the digital divide and implementing the outcomes of the WSIS'.

(www.itu.int/osg/spu/publications/worldinformationsociety/2007)

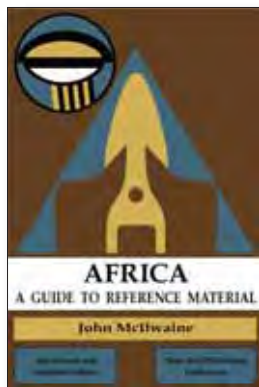
Recent publications

Nick Mulhern, ACU librarian, summarises.

Africa: A Guide to Reference Material

A revised (2nd edition) of a major reference directory, first published in 1993, which assesses the value of available sources on Africa. It comprises entries reviewing atlases, directories, encyclopaedias, and yearbooks, among other sources. Information is organised according to broad regional groupings in addition to national listings. This edition, for the first time, also incorporates review coverage from 'leading Africanist and professional library journals' as well as some specialist titles.

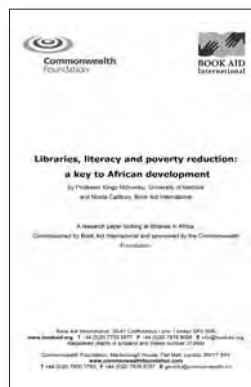
[McIlwaine, J. (ed.); 978-0-9541029-3-7; 2007; Hans Zell Publishing (www.hanszell.co.uk)]



ional statistics and analysis, the report makes some specific recommendations: namely that 'comprehensive ICT training

packages are developed for information professionals in the universities that build on existing ICT skills', and that a categorisation system be developed to identify characteristics that are relevant to e-readiness.

[CAVAL Collaborative Solutions for UNESCO Bangkok (Communication and Information) and Japanese Funds In Trust; 2006; JFIT; Unesco (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=22780&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)]



Libraries, Literacy & Poverty Reduction: a Key to African Development

A research paper looking at libraries in Africa, Commissioned by Book Aid International & sponsored by the Commonwealth Foundation. Sets out the challenges faced by libraries and information centres in Africa, with case studies (both within and outside the region). Includes recommendations for library

networks as well as for governments and aid donors.

[Mchombu, K.; Cadbury, N.; 2006; BAI (www.bookaid.org/resources/downloads/Libraries_Literacy_Poverty_Reduction.pdf)]

Changing Roles of Academic and Research Libraries

An online essay on technology and change in academic libraries based on a meeting hosted by The Learning Alliance's Robert Zemsky and attended by senior university staff, as well as representatives from related sectors. It addresses the opportunities which academic libraries may value, both within and beyond the sector. The essay, and an option to contribute to the issues raised, is available on the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) website.

[ACRL; 2006; ACRL (www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/future/changingroles.htm)]

Higher Education in the Internet Age: Libraries Creating a Strategic Edge

An analysis of, and argument for, the role which university libraries can have in contributing to institutional strategy. It is based on an earlier ACE title by the same authors, though acknowledges the transformation that has since occurred both in libraries through the Internet, and more generally in teaching/ learning practice.

[ACE/Praeger Series on Higher Education, Breivik, P.S.; Gee, E.G.; 978-0-275-98194-5; 2006; ACE/Praeger (www.acenet.edu) (www.greenwood.com) (www.praeger.com)]



Researchers' Use of Academic Libraries and their services

A detailed study, based on surveys and focus group analysis, focusing on the relationship between researchers and research libraries in the UK. Commissioned by RIN and CURL. It aims to contribute to the development of library strategy, given the changing use of libraries by researchers and significant trends in research

practice (e.g. increasing collaboration, interdisciplinary study, and the increasing availability of research publications electronically).

[Research Information Network (RIN)/Consortium of Research Libraries (Curl) (2007) (www.rin.ac.uk/whats-new-libraries-report)]

E-Readiness in the Asia-Pacific Region: Results of a Survey to Assess the Need for ICT Training for Information Professionals in the Region

A report of a survey undertaken in 2005-2006 of 16 Asia Pacific countries (including several in the Commonwealth). Covers issues of infrastructure, access, and the availability of resources, in addition to the availability and need for training. The report specifically recognises the 'imbalance of connectivity, infrastructure and skills between the cities and the rural areas in the countries surveyed'. It acknowledges the role which university libraries can have in providing the 'technology, infrastructure and skills required for efficient Internet access'. Although useful for its comparative internat-

Librarianship as a Bridge to an Information and Knowledge Society in Africa

Reproduces some conference papers from a Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Library and Information Associations (SCECSAL XVII) meeting in 2006. It acknowledges the importance of 'libraries becoming more inclusive and serving the needs of all'. Collectively the papers 'provide an insight into the struggle of information services in this part of Africa to be part of an emerging information and knowledge society'. [IFLA Publications; 124, Mcharazo, A.;

Forthcoming: World Guide to Library, Archive, and Information Science Education

(due 10/2007)

A comprehensive directory of professional education and training programmes in library and related information studies offered in higher education throughout the world. This is the 3rd revised edition.

[2007; K.G. Saur Verlag (www.saur.de) (www.ifla.org/VII/s23/pub/WorldGuide3rd.htm)]

Funding Opportunities

This edition of *LINK* features funding opportunities brought to you by ResearchResearch. With editorial teams in London, Washington DC, Sydney, Brussels, Stockholm, Amsterdam and Cape Town, ResearchResearch provides a comprehensive source of funding opportunities, open to researchers around the world. ResearchResearch.com – your resource for Research Funds, Sponsors & News

FP7 ICT based e-infrastructures

Closing Date: 5pm Brussels, 20 September 2007

Details: The European Commission has launched a call for proposals for collaborative projects and coordination and support actions, under its Framework 7 capacities work programme, on support for: existing research infrastructures; and support for policy development and programme implementation.

<http://www.researchresearch.com/getpage.cfm?pagename=FundingOpRecord&lang=EN&type=default&id=184331&orgLang=EN>

Carnegie international development program

Closing Date: proposals are reviewed each February, April, June and October

Details: The Carnegie Corporation of New York invites letters of interest for its international development program. The program provides support for strengthening African universities, enhancing women's opportunities in HE and revitalising African libraries. Average grant is between USD 25,000 and USD 50,000. NGOs and universities from sub-Saharan Africa are eligible to apply.

<http://www.researchresearch.com/getpage.cfm?pagename=FundingOpRecord&lang=EN&type=default&id=169567&orgLang=EN>

Finnish Technology Award Foundation Millennium technology prize

Closing Date: 01 October 2007

Details: The purpose is to recognise outstanding technological achievement specifically directed to the advancement of society and its ability to sustain quality of life in the fields of: energy and the environment; communications and information; new materials and processes; healthcare and life sciences. The prize is worth EUR 1 million.

<http://www.researchresearch.com/getpage.cfm?pagename=FundingOpRecord&lang=EN&type=default&id=182503&orgLang=EN>

Library and information science

Closing Date: 01 October 2007

Details: The Association for Library and Information Science Education invites proposals for its research grant programme competition. Awards totalling USD 5,000 may be made to support research related to education for library and information science.

<http://www.researchresearch.com/getpage.cfm?pagename=FundingOpRecord&lang=EN&type=default&id=180968&orgLang=EN>

EU FP7 ICT

Closing Date: 5pm Brussels, 09 October 2007

Details: The European Commission Framework Programme 7 Cooperation work programme has released the second call under the initiative Information and Communication Technologies. The funding schemes available are: collaborative projects, networks of excellence, coordination and support action. The following topics are being called: pervasive and trusted network and service infrastructures; components, systems, engineering; towards sustainable and personalised healthcare; ICT for mobility, environmental sustainability and energy; ICT for independent living and inclusion.

<http://www.researchresearch.com/getpage.cfm?pagename=FundingOpRecord&lang=EN&type=default&id=183971&orgLang=EN>

IDRC Doctoral research award

Closing Date: 01 November 2007

Details: Awards for field research at doctoral level, between three and 12 months to a maximum of CAD 20,000 per year to promote Canadian research on sustainable and equitable development. Available to Canadian citizens or citizens of a developing country registered at a Canadian university. Areas corresponding to IDRC's research priorities include social and economic policy; environment and natural resource management; information and communication technologies for development; innovation, policy and science.

<http://www.researchresearch.com/getpage.cfm?pagename=FundingOpRecord&lang=EN&type=default&id=181390&orgLang=EN>

Developing country meetings

Closing Date: 01 June and 01 December annually

Details: The Third World Academy of Sciences invites applications for its grants for scientific meetings held in developing countries. Grants encourage the organisation of high level international and regional scientific activities in developing countries by offering financial assistance to the organisers of conferences, workshops, symposia and special meetings. Up to USD 3,000 available for travel grants for principal speakers from abroad or participants from developing countries.

<http://www.researchresearch.com/getpage.cfm?pagename=FundingOpRecord&lang=EN&type=default&id=177089&orgLang=EN>

Pirelli ICT prize

Closing Date: 12 midnight, 31 December 2007

Details: Set of prizes awarded every year to the best multimedia works oriented toward education, the environment or the latest ICTs that power multimedia itself. Awards are granted in the following categories: physics, chemistry, mathematics, life sciences, and information and communications technology. Overall budget is USD 130,000.

<http://www.researchresearch.com/getpage.cfm?pagename=FundingOpRecord&lang=EN&type=default&id=164010&orgLang=EN>

Global Biodiversity Information Facility – Ebbe Nielsen prize

Closing Date: 01 March 2008

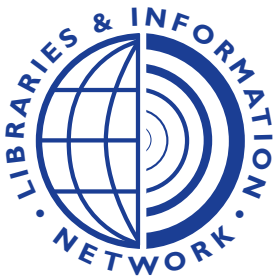
Details: The prize is for innovation in biosystematics and biodiversity informatics research. EUR 30,000 offered to a promising researcher in the early stage of his or her career and allows the recipient to engage in research outside their country of residence for three to six months.

<http://www.researchresearch.com/getpage.cfm?pagename=FundingOpRecord&lang=EN&type=default&id=181079&orgLang=EN>

L

ResearchResearch
Newspaper for the research world

To enquire about a trial individual subscription or a site license to cover your whole institution, contact Jon Thornton by phone on +44 20 7216 6531 or email at jt@researchresearch.com



Editorial Team

Dr John Kirkland, Jonathan Harle, Natasha Lokhun
libraries@acu.ac.uk

Design

Chris Monk

Printers

Chandlers Printers Ltd,
Bexhill-on-Sea

LINK is the newsletter of the ACU's Libraries and Information Network, published by the Association of Commonwealth Universities.

The Association of Commonwealth Universities
Woburn House
20-24 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9HF
Tel: + 44 (0) 20 7380 6700
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7387 2655

LINK is published for information purposes only and no liability is accepted for its contents by the ACU or by any contributor to it. While all reasonable efforts have been made to ensure that the information contained in *LINK* was correct at the time of compilation, it should not be regarded as definitive and no responsibility is accepted for the inclusion or omission of any particular item or for the views expressed therein.
© The Association of Commonwealth Universities
2007

**The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities**

ACU Libraries and Information Network

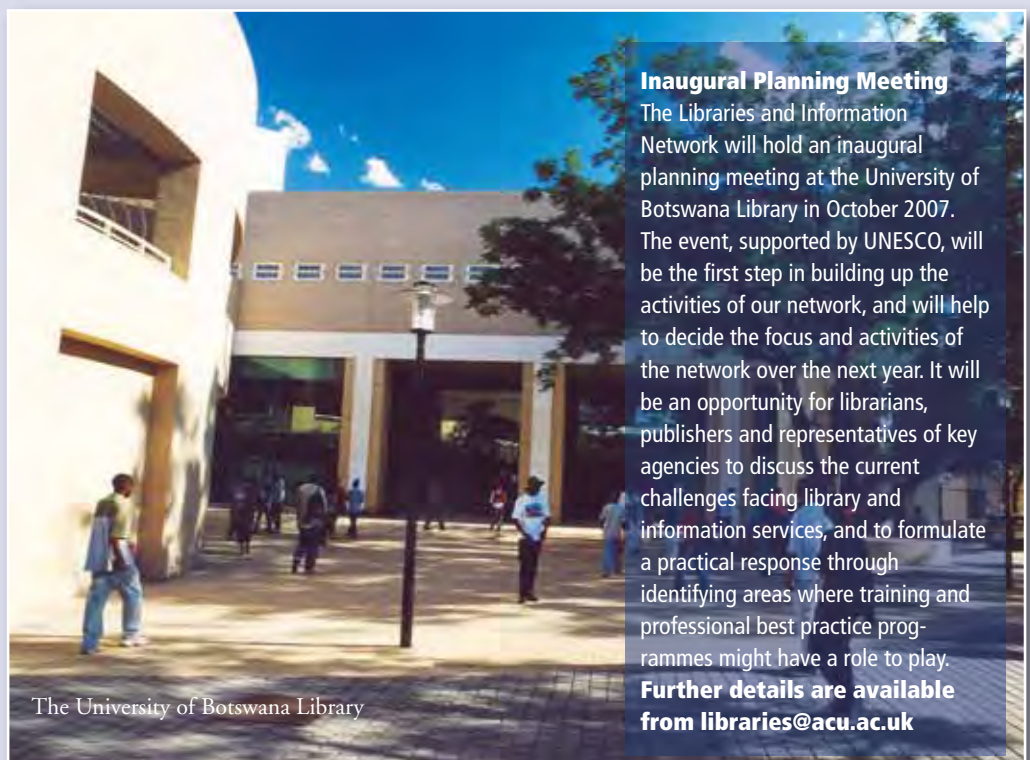
Libraries and information services are an essential feature of any university. Information technologies are advancing and offering great potential, as well as new challenges. At the same time, higher education and the need for improved access to information and knowledge have gained greater profiles in development agendas. As countries and their universities across the Commonwealth embrace the idea of 'the knowledge society', libraries have an increasingly important role to play.

While there is already international activity in these fields, and while librarians by the nature of their profession are likely to be among the best connected of university professionals, there are still considerable challenges. Problems of information access globally are not always well understood, and there is still greater scope for improved links between librarians in developing and developed countries. Librarians commonly engage with a range of professional associations and groups, nationally and internationally. We intend to work with and alongside these. But we also believe that the

ACU Libraries and Information Network offers unique perspectives and opportunities. It will help to foster informal links between a diverse group of institutions and people, and in doing so create a forum which belongs to both developing and developed country members.

The network is open to librarians in all ACU member universities, and is completely free to join. Members will receive a free copy of future issues of *LINK*, the network's regular magazine, and will benefit from shared professional expertise, knowledge and best practice. Publishers with an interest in working more closely with members are also invited to join.

Simply fill in the enclosed form and return it to the address provided. We welcome your thoughts on how the network could help you, the issues it should address, and your particular areas of interest – please note this in the space provided. We are also looking for articles for future issues of this magazine, so if you have something to contribute please get in touch. Most of all, we encourage you to get involved!
libraries@acu.ac.uk



The University of Botswana Library

Inaugural Planning Meeting

The Libraries and Information Network will hold an inaugural planning meeting at the University of Botswana Library in October 2007. The event, supported by UNESCO, will be the first step in building up the activities of our network, and will help to decide the focus and activities of the network over the next year. It will be an opportunity for librarians, publishers and representatives of key agencies to discuss the current challenges facing library and information services, and to formulate a practical response through identifying areas where training and professional best practice programmes might have a role to play.
Further details are available from libraries@acu.ac.uk